

**DETERMINATION AND FINDINGS FOR A  
SOLE SOURCE PROCUREMENT**

**Contract No:**

**Caption: Pre-K Classroom Observations**

**Proposed Contractor: School Readiness Consulting (“SRC”)**

**Program Agency: Office of the State Superintendent of Education**

**FINDINGS**

**1. AUTHORIZATION:**

D.C. Official Code §2-354.04, 27 DCMR 27 Sections 1304.2, 1305.1 and 1701

**2. MINIMUM NEED:**

The Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) has an immediate need for a contractor to conduct 860 classroom observations on or before April 30, 2018 of children in Pre-K classrooms across multiple sectors including District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS), District of Columbia Public Charter Schools (DCPCS), and Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) using the Classroom Assessment Scoring System™ Pre-K (CLASS™ Pre-K or CLASS). The contractor must have the operational capacity and logistical ability to begin evaluations immediately upon award and to perform all 860 evaluations no later than April 30, 2018.

The requirement for this contractor is set forth in DC Code §38-271.03, which requires an annual independent quality assessment evaluation of DCPS, DCPCS and CBOS in the District of Columbia. CLASS™ Pre-K is an observational tool that assesses classroom quality based on the interactions that take place throughout all elements of formal and informal instruction.

The CLASS™ assessment is also one of the required indicators in OSSE’s federally approved state accountability system pursuant to the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA), as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) (20 USC § 6301 et. seq.). The ESSA plan requires OSSE to administer a common accountability system which measures performance for all schools in the District of Columbia. The common accountability system for the District of Columbia uses CLASS™ Pre-K as one of the measures of quality for programs serving pre-K-age children.

To create performance report cards for each school on the timeline set forth by federal law, the finalized data must be available for analysis no later than May 1, 2018; thus, all 860 pre-k classrooms in our DC public schools and CBOs must be assessed by April 30, 2018.

### **3. ESTIMATED REASONABLE COST:**

The estimated fair and reasonable price to provide the required services effort is \$873,679 for the Base Year.

### **4. FACTS WHICH JUSTIFY SOLE SOURCE PROCUREMENT:**

SRC is the only contractor that can immediately meet the minimum need set forth above, which is necessary to implement the common school accountability system required by federal law. Any other contractor would need a transition period to transition into the work. SRC is the only contractor who does not need a transition period because SRC performed the services in the past. From 2013-2017, SRC conducted over 2,500 CLASS™ pre-K Quality observation for the District. The timeline for SRC's previous work in the District is as follows:

- 2011** SRC initially began work on CLASS™ evaluations in the District in 2011 for DCPS.
- 2012** In 2012, SRC began to perform evaluations for the Public Charter School Board (PCSB) in developing the Charter Schools Early Childhood Performance Management Framework (PMF).
- 2014 - 2017** SRC was awarded a grant ("Grant") in January 2014 to conduct CLASS™ assessments for the 2013-2014 school year (SY2013-2014) across the District pursuant to the Pre-K Act. SRC completed 371 classroom evaluations for SY2013-2014. Beginning in 2015, SRC performed CLASS™ assessment across all sectors for the 2014- 2015, 2015-2016 and 2016-2017 school years. In SY14-15 they completed 466 classroom evaluations; in SY15-16 they evaluated 802 classroom evaluations; and in SY16-17 SRC evaluated over 860 classrooms.

SRC has developed clear protocols for scheduling observations, how to address cancelations, observation methodology, and length of observation. These protocols resulted in 10% reduced cancelation rate and a 100% reduction in the appeal rate of program/school level reports over the past 6 years. In the past, programs/schools would cancel the observation the day of the observation for various reasons. SRC developed detailed protocols for scheduling/cancelation etc. which helped reduce the cancelation rate by 10% in FY17. Once an observation is completed and data is given to schools/programs, have the option to appeal the score if they felt like the observation was conducted outside of the observation protocol. In the past, OSSE received an average of seven to ten appeals each year. After SRC developed strong/clear protocols around its training of data collectors on who, what, how long to observe, the appeal rate has decreased. In 2017, there were no appeals requested.

SRC can reinstitute all the protocols and policies that allowed for the successful implementation of a District wide CLASS™ assessment over the past 6 years, leverage established relationships with schools and CBOs to facilitate scheduling, administration and communication, and immediately activate its network of certified CLASS™ observers to begin the work of data collection upon award. Accordingly, SRC is the only contractor that can immediately provide the District with these critical services.

A contractor other than SRC will require up to 90 days for a transition period in order to set up the operational, communication, and logistical structures necessary to implement a District wide assessment of all 860 Pre-K classrooms in 225 schools or CBOs, serving more than 13,000 DC preschool age children by April 30, 2018. Other contractors would require time to transition into the work because they would have to spend time and effort developing the necessary knowledge of the DC education landscape, building relationships with key leaders in the various sectors, developing protocols and providing logistical supports.

There are 860 class rooms that must be scheduled, observed and assessed with the CLASS™ tool by April 30, 2018. This kind of time pressure has not existed in past school years but is now critical due to rollout of the ESSA accountability system. Every day that goes by between now and April 30 reduces the amount of time the vendor has to complete all 860 observations, thus increasing the rate at which the observations that must be performed. Due to their longstanding experience within the pre-k community, SRC can immediately begin observations upon award with no transition time. In 2016-17 school year, SRC conducted 350 CLASS™ observations in 90 days. For the 2017-2018 school year, the vendor will have to complete over 500 observations in the first 90 days. During the previous years, the classroom observations started in November. In SY16-17 SRC conducted 860 classroom observations over a period of 6 months or 142 observations per month. This year SY17-18 the number of observations increased to 860 classrooms over a 5 month period or 172 observations per month which will result in 500 observations conducted over the 90 day period.

If OSSE is unable to execute this assessment and administer the accountability system within the timeframes outlined above, it would constitute a default on one of OSSE's primary obligations to the federal government millions of dollars in federal education grants would be at risk.

Additionally, without complete information from the CLASS™ assessment and the state accountability system, OSSE would not be able to distribute school support funding appropriately to schools in need of turnaround funding. Ultimately, the administration of the CLASS™ assessment must proceed to prevent a serious disruption to agency operations, namely its federal obligations and providing critical support to the District's public education system.

### **CLASS™ Evaluation Transition**

The transition process for another contractor will take approximately 90 days to complete. The main factors for a new contractor to transition into the CLASS contract are noted below:

- i. Developing and implementing a scheduling and administration processes and protocols to evaluate 860 classrooms in 225 schools or CBOs by April 30, 2018;
- ii. Hiring or contracting with 30 observers with CLASS™ Pre-K certifications who live within a 100 mile radius of the Washington Metropolitan area in order to have the personnel capacity to effectively schedule, manage and staff CLASS™ assessment observations of 860 classrooms by April 30, 2018, which is approximately 170 individual classroom evaluations every month. (60-90 days);
- iii. Hiring or contracting with bilingual CLASS™ pre-K certified observers in Spanish, French, Hebrew, and Mandarin. (30-60 days);
- iv. Developing and implementing, in partnership with OSSE, detailed communications for school leaders and CBOs about the CLASS™ scheduling and administration process (30-60 days);
- v. Developing relationships with school leaders and center directors across the 225 early childhood programs across the District (30-90 days) ;
- vi. Developing and distributing protocols and policies around scheduling observations, how to address cancellations, observation methodology, and length of observation. (30-60 days);
- vii. Conducting CLASS™ observations in at least five hundred (500) classrooms by 2/28/2017. (90 days);
- viii. Developing and implementing training for all staff regarding mandated reporting requirements and an established protocol for addressing high negative climate that occurs during the observation process. (30-60 days).

Currently, SRC is the only contractor that has conducted CLASS™ evaluations for the purpose of school accountability in the District. SRC is the only entity that has established protocols and procedures to facilitate uniformity, validity, consistency, timeliness and accuracy in the CLASS™ assessment process across a variety of Pre-K classroom environments. SRC has the personnel capacity and the logistical organization structure to immediately operationalize a large scale CLASS™ assessment across the multiple Pre-K sectors and complete all 860 classroom observations by April 30, 2018. Therefore, SRC is the only contractor that can begin the work immediately and to complete the work in the 5 month time frame.

## 5. CERTIFICATION BY AGENCY DIRECTOR

I hereby certify that the above findings are true, correct and complete to the best of my knowledge and belief.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Hanseul Kang, Director  
Office of the State Superintendent of Education

## 6. CERTIFICATION BY THE CONTRACTING OFFICER

Based on the findings, I hereby determine that School Readiness Consulting shall be responsible and capable of satisfactorily administering at least 860 Classroom Assessment Scoring System™ Pre-K (CLASS™ Pre-K) assessments by April 30, 2018 under the Proposed Sole Source Contract. I have reviewed the above findings and certify that they are sufficient to justify the use of the sole source method of procurement under the cited authority. I certify that the notice of intent to award a sole source contract was published in accordance with D.C. Official Code §2-354.04. SRC is the only contractor that can meet the District's minimum needs and is the only vendor at this time that can perform immediately the critical, high quality services within the time frame required. I recommend that the Chief Procurement Officer approve the use of the sole source procurement method for this proposed contract.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

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Alvin N. Stith  
Contracting Officer  
Office of Contracting and Procurement

## **DETERMINATION**

Based upon the above findings and in accordance with D.C. Official Code §2-354.04, I hereby determine that it is not feasible or practical to invoke the competitive solicitation process under either Section 402 or 403 of the District of Columbia Procurement Practices Reform Act of 2010 (D.C. Law 18-371; D.C. Official Code § 2-354.02 or 2-354.03). Accordingly, I determine that the District is justified in using the sole source method of procurement.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

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George A. Schutter III  
Chief Procurement Officer  
Office of Contracting and Procurement